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ABSTRACT

The National Center for Research in Vocational Education has developed a framework for identifying exemplary career guidance and counseling programs. The framework, which is to be tested at selected pilot sites during 1994, is designed for use in evaluating secondary- and postsecondary-level guidance and counseling programs targeting one or more of the following populations: educationally or economically disadvantaged individuals, disabled individuals, students with limited English proficiency, participants in programs designed to eliminate sex bias, and persons in correctional institutions. The proposed framework consists of the following clusters of program components: (1) institutional support, leadership, and program evaluation (facilities, financial support, guidance personnel qualifications, professional development, program evaluation, and follow-up of program completers and noncompleters); (2) career guidance and counseling program plan (assisting students/clients in self-assessment, educational/occupational exploration, and lifelong career planning; addressing needs of diverse student populations; program support services; and career information delivery systems); and (3) collaboration, articulation, and communication (family/parental, faculty/staff, and student involvement; agency collaboration; and collaboration with business). (MN)

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EXEMPLARY CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAMS FOR THE NATION'S DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATION: A PRELIMINARY FRAMEWORK

by Carolyn Maddy-Bernstein

CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING- key to addressing the needs of a diverse student population

America's school population has become increasingly diverse. Clearly, a substantial social and educational effort is required to alleviate the problems associated with our growing diversity (e.g., high dropout rates, crime, high unemployment rates, teen parents, substance abuse, increased poverty). While guidance and counseling is only one component of the educational effort required to better assist students with diverse needs, it is a very important one. Thus, a major 1994 activity of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education's Office of Special Populations is to identify exemplary career guidance and counseling programs serving diverse student populations and disseminate information about them to the field.

This BRIEF describes a framework for identifying exemplary career guidance and counseling programs to be tested at selected pilot sites during 1994. When the framework is validated, the Office of Special Populations will conduct a national search of programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels that target one or more of the identified populations. Under the 1990 Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, the groups of students to be served include:

- individuals who are educationally or economically disadvantaged;
- those with disabilities;
- students with limited English proficiency;
- individuals who participate in programs designed to eliminate sex bias; and
- those in correctional institutions.

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Background

The Office of Special Populations will build on past successes of identifying exemplary programs.

Since 1990, the Center's Office of Special Populations has conducted an annual search for exemplary vocational education programs serving students who are members of special populations. The framework used to identify those programs resulted from a year long research project undertaken by National Center researchers (Wermuth & Phelps, 1990). The research, which was specifically designed to provide the Office of Special Populations with a structure for identifying effective vocational programs serving students with special needs, included a review of previous studies on effective programs and practices, project reports from selected state boards of education, legislation, and a national survey of special needs educators. To date, that annual search has recognized nearly 20 excellent programs that target one or more of the populations defined in the 1990 Perkins Act. Identified programs are located at secondary schools, vocational/technical centers, community colleges, and community agencies. The Office of Special Populations will draw on its successes in identifying exemplary vocational programs serving students with special needs in its recognition program of exemplary career guidance and counseling programs.

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Definitions

It is generally accepted that **career development** is a lifelong process which incorporates general education, occupational training, and work, as well as one's social and leisure life. **Career education** is the process designed to assist individuals in their career development. **Career guidance** is one component of a career education program. According to the National Career Development Guidelines (1989), a career guidance program:

- Is identifiable but integrated with other programs within the institution.
- Enhances the career development knowledge, skills, and abilities of all students by establishing program standards.
- Uses coordinated activities designed to support student achievement of the standards.
- Supports the delivery of the program through qualified leadership; diversified staffing; adequate facilities, materials and financial resources; and effective management.
- Is accountable, with evaluation that is based on program effectiveness in supporting student achievement of the career guidance and counseling standards. (Local Handbook for High Schools, p. 1)

While this BRIEF addresses the guidance and counseling component of career education, it is essential that administrators, teachers, students, parents, and the business community also be intricately involved in the career education of all students.

The Guidance and Counseling Framework

The framework for identifying exemplary guidance programs consists of three clusters of components:

- **Program Support, Leadership, and Evaluation**
- **Career Guidance and Counseling Program Plan**
- **Collaboration, Articulation, and Communication**

The framework for identifying exemplary guidance programs serving diverse populations consists basically of three clusters of components: (1) the leadership and support given the career guidance and counseling program by the institution (e.g., high school principal, community college administration, policies that support the program, evaluation and follow-up policy and practice); (2) the delivery of program activities; and (3) the collaborative and articulation efforts.

The first set of components—*Program Support, Leadership, and Evaluation*—are typical of any good program. Such programs have strong administrative support, financial assistance, a comprehensive professional development program, qualified personnel, ongoing program evaluation, and follow-up to determine program and students outcomes.

Most of the second set of components—*Career Guidance and Counseling Program Plan*—are adapted from the National Career Development Guidelines (NOICC, 1989). According to a Department of Labor publication (Allum, 1993):

> ...there is widespread agreement that career guidance, properly implemented, addresses three broad competency areas involved in the career development process. [The author notes these competency areas abound in the literature and are reflected in the National Career Development Guidelines.] Ideally, career guidance programs will enhance:
>
> (1) Self-knowledge and self-awareness: Conscious examination of personal values, interests, and goals;
>
> (2) Educational and occupational exploration: Presentation and integration of information and experience; and
>
> (3) Decision-making and career planning: Understanding the interrelations between the self and the world and developing skills to make realistic choices and rational decisions. (p. 9)

While addressing the needs of diverse student populations should be inherent in all the elements of exemplary guidance programs, this component is included in this framework to determine how economic status, gender, culture, race, and ability differences are met. In addition, support services (e.g., peer counseling program, volunteers) and a strong career information delivery system enrich guidance programs.

The third group of components– *Collaboration, Articulation, and Communication*—stresses the significance of forging strong partnerships with parents, businesses, teachers, and community organizations. Effective career guidance and counseling programs have substantial community and business support. (See Figure 1.)

The proposed framework is drawn from several research studies.

The framework for identifying exemplary career guidance and counseling programs serving diverse student populations is drawn from several studies (Burac, 1992; Brolin, 1989; Brolin & Gysbers, 1989; Hohenshill & Mora Szymanski, 1989; McDaniels & Gysbers, 1992; Super, 1990; Wermuth & Phelps, 1990) in addition to the National Career Development Guidelines (1989) and the U.S. Department of Education's Peer Review System for Identifying Exemplary Guidance and Counseling Programs. The format of the proposed Guidance and Counseling Framework is based on the Office of Special Populations' framework to identify exemplary vocational education programs serving students who are members of special populations developed by Wermuth and Phelps (1990).

The preliminary guidance and counseling framework has been reviewed by a panel of national leaders in the field of career guidance, the Board of the American Vocational Association's Guidance Division, and practitioners in a comprehensive high school and an area technical center. It will be tested at selected pilot sites during 1994 and a national search will be conducted in 1995. Persons interested in participating in the 1995 national search should contact the Office of Special Populations. (See page 4 for contact information.)

FIGURE 1

COMPONENTS OF EXEMPLARY CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PROGRAMS SERVING DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATIONS: A PRELIMINARY FRAMEWORK

A. Institutional Support, Leadership, and Program Evaluation

1. Institutional Support (Administration/Governing Body)
2. Facilities
3. Financial Support
4. Guidance Personnel Qualifications
5. Professional Development
6. Program Evaluation
7. Follow-up of Program Completers and Noncompleters

B. Career Guidance and Counseling Program Plan

1. Assisting Students/Clients In:
   - 1.1. Increasing Self-Knowledge and Self-Advocacy
   - 1.2. Educational and Occupational Exploration
   - 1.3. Lifelong Career Planning, Preparation, and Transition

   (Adapted from the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee's (NOICC) *National Career Development Guidelines*, 1989.)
2. Addressing the Needs of Diverse Student Populations
3. Program Support Services
4. Career Information Delivery System

C. Collaboration, Articulation, and Communication

1. Family/Parental Involvement and Support
2. Faculty/Staff Involvement in Career Guidance and Counseling Program
3. Student Involvement
4. Intra- and Interagency Collaboration
5. Collaboration with Business

Programs must be operational and have two or more years of measured outcomes to be eligible.

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The Office of Special Populations (formerly Technical Assistance for Special Populations Program - TASPP) of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, University of California, Berkeley, is housed at the University of Illinois. The Office of Special Populations works nationally to increase the accessibility, quality, and availability of vocational programs for youth and adults from special populations.

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